

Gator Tales



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A newsletter for the citizens of the PRVWSD community

The Pearl River Valley Water Supply District

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BARNETT RESERVOIR FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 2014 EVENTS



The Barnett Reservoir Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization that supports the Pearl River Valley Water Supply District, has announced its 2014 dates for its two biggest events.

Its 3rd Annual Independence Day Celebration and Fireworks Show will be Saturday, June 28 at both Lakeshore and Old Trace Parks. For the first time, it will include a coordinated fireworks show on both sides of

the lake. Both parks will again host live music, food vendors, kids activities and displays. The Lighted Boat Parade will put on a show for both parks.

Its 2nd Annual Smokin' on The Rez BBQ Championship, a Memphis BBQ Network sanctioned cookoff, will be held Nov. 7-8 at Old Trace Park.

Visit: www.BarnettReservoirFoundation.org for details.



TWO FOR ONE

The Barnett Reservoir Foundation has also announced a new membership offer to help the PRVWSD reach its necessary pre-sale goal of 300 REZ specialty tags (almost 200 sold so far). For 2014, the \$50 individual annual membership in the Barnett Reservoir Foundation will include an offer to dedicate \$31 of that annual fee to the purchase of one of the REZ specialty tags for that member. New and returning members will be eligible.

The Foundation is also sponsoring **prize drawings for the first 300 to pre-order their REZ tag!** Prize packages include gift certificates to local restaurants, service gifts, designation as one of the first 10 numbered tag issued, VIP passes to 2014 events, and more! Drawings will be held upon the receipt of 300th pre-sale! **NOW IS THE TIME TO ORDER!**

To take advantage of these offers, visit www.BarnettReservoirFoundation.org.

News Around the REZ

SCHEDULED EVENTS

3/22/14	Run Up for Downs	Old Trace	5K Run/Walk
4/5/14	Racin' For a Seed	Fannin	Duathlon
4/26/14	On the Road to Health	Old Trace	Biking
5/3/14	Natchez Trace Century Ride	Old Trace	Biking
5/9/14	Pepsi Pops	Old Trace	MS Symphony
5/17/14	Dragon Boat Regatta	Old Trace	Boat Race
5/31/14	Gator Bait Hatchling Race	LakeShore	Kids Kayak Race
6/7/14	Heatwave Classic	Old Trace	Triathlon
6/28/14	3 rd Annual Independence Day Celebration at The REZ	ALL	Community Celebration
8/24/14	Pinelake Baptism	LakeShore	Church Event
9/7/14	9/11 Memorial Run	LakeShore	½ Marathon

Lakeshore Park Electrical

Improvements

The PRVWSD Board of Directors accepted the best bid available and work should begin soon on an electrical upgrade at Lakeshore Park on the lower east side of Barnett Reservoir. The upgrade is scheduled to be completed prior to the Independence Day Celebration on June 28, and will provide full service to the stage area. A similar project was completed in 2013 at Old Trace Park in Madison County.

Phase One of Dredging Nears Completion

Phase 1 of a multi-year project to dredge boat channels in Barnett Reservoir subdivisions is nearing completion. Areas included in Phase 1 are Bay Park, Harbor View, Turtle Creek and the west side of Forest Point.

"The areas chosen for the first year were based on need," said reservoir engineer Greg Burgess. "Then we had to consider adding neighboring areas that we could include in the same phase and be cost effective."

Reservoir officials had hoped to complete the work in 2013, but problems in the bidding process caused a delay and forced changes in the original plans.

Part of the redesign was relocation of the spoil site. Burgess said the original plan to pump the spoil across to Pelahatchie Bay's north shore was too costly, and the east bank of Pelahatchie Shore Park was chosen. The Park will see an increase in size, with the new shoreline destined to become a sand beach after the spoil has time to settle.



New Turtle Point Park Under Design

PRVWSD's new Turtle Point Nature Area Trail and Kayak Launch has entered the design phase and construction should begin later this year. The project, to be built on the current Scenic Park location off Scenic Drive between the Turtle Creek and Forest Point subdivisions, was made possible by a federal recreational trails grant through the Mississippi Department Of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. The grant will reimburse PRVWSD with federal funds equal to 80 percent of the cost of the park.

PRVWSD Opens New Office on Spillway Road



The Pearl River Valley Water Supply District has opened its new Permit and Payment Center at **1864 Spillway Road**, between Polks Drugs and McDonalds. It is home to the District's Building Department, Permit Office and Code Enforcement. This location also houses a payment center for water services, leasehold fees and all permits issued. Contact this office at (769) 243-7014. Office hours M-F 7:30am-5:30pm

FLOOD INSURANCE: If you have received a flood certification letter from your insurance or mortgage company and you would like to discuss the certification, please contact PRVWSD staff at (769) 243-7014

Upriver Campsite Cleanup Leads to New Regulations

After a winter-long — and ongoing — cleanup that includes the removal of over a quarter of a million pounds of materials and garbage, the PRVWSD's board of directors has passed a new list of upriver camping regulations for Barnett Reservoir.

The rules, which will end community-like permanent camps, are the result of a nearly yearlong cooperative effort with an upriver advisory group, which includes representatives of the lake's various user groups.

"It is hoped that this will open camping opportunities to a larger group of people, and end the perceived ownership of many areas of the river," said Barnett Reservoir General Manager John Sigman. "We are also confident that the new regulations will help us better manage the resource."

Sigman referred to the 140 tons of items such as carpet, tarps, tents and building frames left from over two decades of camping as the impetus for the new regulations.

"All of that material eventually ends up in the river, it is not good for water quality and it's a hindrance to wildlife," he said.

Proposed changes classify all camping on reservoir property, outside of developed campgrounds, as primitive, and defines "primitive camping" as:

- being limited to 10 days.
- without permanent structures or ground covers, or improvements like water, power and sewer.
- no alteration of natural setting or wildlife habitat.
- all equipment used in camping must be removed at the end of the trip.
- Campers will also be required to obtain a free camping permit prior to setting up camp, and will be provided a number that must be prominently displayed at the site. Call 601-829-2751 or 601-992-9703, after hours, to obtain a permit.

Fannin Landing Project Entering Final Phase

Through a federal grant provided by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, the Pearl River Valley Water Supply District has begun the design process for a new comfort station at Fannin Landing, the final stage of the boat ramp renovation project. PRVWSD will soon advertise for bidding the construction. The grant, from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, will provide a 75 percent reimbursement for the cost of the project. **Image of Fannin Landing sunset provided by Jim Albritton/Newsocracy TV.**



NOTICE TO FISHERMEN:

Trotlines, static lines, or jug lines are not allowed below a northeasterly line intersecting the main lake between Twin Harbor channel to the west and Fannin Landing boat launch to the east, this area includes Pelahatchie Bay. This line also serves as the demarcation line for waterfowl hunting. For further information on this notice please refer to District Regulations Part 203, Chapter 4: Fishing available at www.TheRez.MS.



PRVWSD Has Boat Slips Available at Arbor Landing

PRVWSD has acquired the marina operations at Arbor Landing on the lower main lake in Rankin County, and has slips available for semi-annual or annual rental. The marina is located just north of the newly renovated Fannin Landing boat ramp and parking lot. Slips rent for \$750 for 6 months or \$1,320 for 12 months. For information, call Steve Clark at PRVWSD office (769) 243-7014.

Draw Hunts Below Dam, in Bay Successful: 2nd Season Planned

The Reservoir's first season of public draw deer hunts below the dam and in sections M and N on the northshore of Pelahatchie Bay were a success and plans are to expand the season a month for the 2014-15 season.

Reservoir staff has recommended 18 weekends of hunting between Oct. 2 2014 and Jan. 31 2015, which coincides Mississippi's long archery season in the central part of the state. Each hunt will be four days, from Thursday through Sunday, and each permit will allow two hunters (permit holder and a designated guest), with a two doe, one legal buck limit per permit. The application period will be Aug. 1-14 with the drawing to be held in mid August. There is no cost to apply for the drawing, but permits below the dam will be \$300 and in the Bay \$200. All proceeds will be used to improve recreational opportunities, including hunting, on PRVWSD lands.





P. O. Box 2180
Ridgeland, MS 39158
Phone: 601-856-6574
Fax: 601-856-2585
E-mail: cford@therez.ms

Fishermen Anticipate Great Season for Crappie on The REZ



A few weeks from now, after winter exits and the dogwoods bloom, the crappie in The Rez will head shallow and fishermen will enjoy what promises to be a great spawning season.

One benefit of the new lake level operation plan adopted in 2013, which allowed lake officials to hold water near summer pool all winter, will be guaranteed angler access to the shallow backwaters that crappie use to make babies.

“Absolutely, it will,” said longtime outdoor writer Bobby Cleveland, a reservoir resident and avid fisherman. “I’m thinking 2014 will present us the best opportunity we’ve had in a long, long time. Instead of wondering if the water will rise early enough to open the backwater access, we already know we can get in there.

“Plus, with the extremely cold winter we had, the higher water protected some of the vegetation crappie seek for spawning cover. Biologists are telling us that a lot of the vegetation took a hit, but it would have been worse had the water not been 1½ feet higher than past years. It protected the root bases. Bass fishermen enjoyed the benefit in early March when largemouth started entering their pre-spawn pattern.”

FishHound.com in 2013 ranked Barnett Reservoir No. 29 on its list of top crappie lakes in the country, one of seven in Mississippi on the list.

“It’s better than that, at least it will be this year,” Cleveland said.

Did you know?

Crappie go by many names, and one of the most popular is white perch, which led to the “perchjerker” nickname given crappie fishermen. Truth is, white perch is biologically incorrect.

A white perch is a totally different fish, known as *Morone Americana*, and is a member of a different family — temperate bass. They are found mostly in brackish water on the East Coast and New England.

